

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in the application. New claim 9 has been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claims 1-5 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanshin (JP 2001336407) in view of Voll et al. (USP 4,713,704). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As stated in page 2, line 23-page 3, line 2,

the rocker shaft for the engine valves, which require switching between cams, has been required to have a higher stiffness. However, since the rocker shafts are ordinarily formed of identical parts so that they can be shared, the rocker shafts are formed of parts with diameters suitable for the rocker shaft required to have a higher stiffness.

Therefore, in the claimed invention of the present application, the intake-side rocker shaft, which requires a higher stiffness due to a larger load applied thereto, has a larger diameter than the exhaust-side rocker shaft.

As acknowledged by the Examiner in the Office Action, Sanshin fails to disclose wherein one of said rocker shafts/oil channel which requires to have a higher stiffness has a larger diameter to prevent said one of the rocker shafts from at least one of curving and twisting due to external force incurred to one of intake-side rocker arm and said exhaust-side rocker arm.

In other words, Sanshin fails to disclose or suggest providing an intake-side rocker shaft that “has a larger diameter than the exhaust-side rocker shaft,” and does not even recognize that the stiffness of the intake-side rocker shaft must be increased as compared to the exhaust-side rocker shaft in order to “prevent said one of the rocker shafts from at least one of curving and twisting due to external force incurred,” as stated by the Examiner in the Office Action.

Voll merely discloses enlarging a diameter of a shaft to increase its overall stiffness. Similar to Sanshin, Voll also fails to recognize that the stiffness of the intake-side rocker shaft must be increased as compared to the exhaust-side rocker shaft in order to “prevent said one of the rocker shafts from at least one of curving and twisting due to external force incurred,” as stated by the Examiner in the Office Action.

In view of the above, even assuming that Sanshin and Voll can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, Sanshin in view of Voll fails to disclose or suggest increasing a diameter of the intake-side rocker shaft as compared to the exhaust-side rocker shaft.

Claims 2-5, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

Claim 8 is allowable at least for the similar reasons as stated in the foregoing with regard to claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claims 6 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanshin in view of Voll, and further in view of Konno (USP 5,553,584). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 6 and 7, indirectly dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

New Claim

New claim 9 is allowable at least for the similar reasons as stated in the foregoing with regard to claim 1.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of this claim is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion


Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending claims in the present application are respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: October 24, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

for By:  (reg # 40,417)
Terrell C. Birch
Registration No. 19,382
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant